582 incest *(oku ndo)*. But one may marry relatives of one's own age-level who belong to classes other than those mentioned, i.e. cross-cousins and, on other age-levels, father's sister or sister's daughter. It is said that formerly marriage never took place except between persons who could trace relationship in this way. Today this principle is very liberal in its application.(1) (It would be interesting to have estimates of the number of men who do marry first degree cross-cousins, father's sisters, or sister's daughters, as distinct from classificatory relatives of these classes, and the number who marry outside the *oluse* or *oluina*.)

● 583 Marriage was formerly arranged by the mother's brother (i.e. by the *oluina*), but today there is a tendency for fathers to arrange their daughters' marriages and to receive their marriage payment. (And also, occasionally, to assist their sons in providing marriage payment.)(2) *Ilombo*, or marriage payment, was formerly paid in cattle, blankets etc.(3) Today it is usually paid in cash, the amount being determined by the status of the bride.(4)

Polygyny

421 595 In the sample village (Ngendo, Kasongi chiefdom) described by Childs, of a total of 48 households,

(a) 10 households were polygynous; of these 9 contained only 2 wives or concubines, and the tenth, that of the headman, contained four wives and one concubine,

(b) 27 households were monogynous, and 3 more were occupied by widowers, all formerly monogynous. (The remaining households were occupied by 7 widows and one young unmarried man.)

Childs notes that the proportion of polygynous households in Kasongi chiefdom is probably higher than in other parts of Ovimbundu country for two reasons: the comparatively low marriage-payment in Kasongi as compared with other areas, and the proximity of Kasongi to Esele country, which has long been a source of supply for slave concubines. (Of the 10 polygynous households in Ngendo 5 contained at least 1 Esele concubine.)(5)

Avoidance between in-laws

602 Mutual respect *(esumbilo)* between the two kin groups involved is considered a necessary basis for a successful marriage, and is the reason given for the various avoidances *(oku liyuvuila)* enjoined upon the principals and their respective relatives. These avoidances may be summarised:-

593 (a) A husband and wife must avoid using each other's names.

601 (b) The term *ndatembo* is used for parents-in-law of either sex, and reciprocally for sons-in-law or daughters-in-law. The term is extended to all those whom one's spouse calls "mother", "father" or "child" (Childs, p.52) and apparently also to those whom one's spouse calls *nanu, tatekai* or

(1) Childs, p.54.
(2) Fanis, 1945.
(3) Cushman, 1944, p.45.
(4) Childs, personal communication.
(5) Childs, page 30.

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groups emerged. The information on the cult of the matrilineal spirits which might have thrown some light on matrilineal conflicts and integration, is confused. Both Hastings and Mrs. Tucker state that the matrilineal spirits are always malevolent, but this is not confirmed by my informants,[83] and it may be that they were referring to the traditional belief that sorcery was only practised between members of a matrilineal group. Although, as has been stated, a man looked to his matrilineal kin for economic aid, he might travel with his father (who had first claim on his services), or with his mother's brother or some other kinsman; indeed while his father was still alive he might travel and trade on his own account.[84] The matrilineal group (in this area at least) was not a unit from which trading teams were formed, but rather a means for providing financial assistance when needed for those engaged in trading. It is of course possible that in some areas of Umbundu country the matrilineal kin groups were significant in the organization of trading caravans.

Another institution whose form can be described but whose function cannot be properly known is that of preferential marriage with certain categories of kin. Childs states that the categories were cross-cousins (both patrilateral and matrilateral), the sister's daughter, and the father's sister, and indicates that the cross-cousin marriages were not generally with first-cousins. My informants generally denied that it had been permitted to marry a father's sister, but confirmed his other statements. They added that an indemnification was paid by the bridegroom to the bride's family 'to cut the blood',[85] and that the kinship terms were replaced by affinal. This suggests that these marriages may have been intended to restore distant kinship ties by turning them into affinal ties and so renewing them for the next generation, but how this would operate cannot even be guessed.

[83] Hastings, p. 87; L. S. Tucker, 'The Divining Basket of the Ovimbundu', *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, 1940, pp. 171–201.

[84] Informants.

[85] This was paid down to 1949 or so in the area where I was. It was about 20 escudos, much less than bridewealth. It was formerly referred to by the Umbundu term for 'fine' (*osimbu*), as was the payment made on the death of a non-kinswoman wife.

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Luveli's income from bricklaying. The laying of the bricks that form a modern villager's house may bring 100 escudos.

The basic cash need of an Otjimbundu, then, is for money to pay government demands and to provide clothing for his wife and children, who seem more likely than the men to get new clothing every year.[5] Add to this the possibility of other calls (e.g. provision for a relative's funeral) a desirable income even for this low level of consumption would be 400 escudos (£5) and a more prosperous villager might earn and spend double the amount. Exceptional individuals still remaining within the normal conditions of Umbundu cultural and social life, such as Kambungo, may earn from 2,000 to 3,000 escudos a year, perhaps even more, from agriculture. Maize is the foundation of the agricultural economy, but Kambungo's remark that maize did not pay seems to reflect a trend to find other openings such as growing coffee, which is, however, subject to difficulties of climate.

Within the villages there is some trade in handmade objects such as pottery, sleeping-mats, and sticks for stirring mush, and there are quite a number of bricklayers, carpenters, and tailors (proprietors of sewing-machines) who have acquired European skills which bring them money. These craftsmen are, on payment of a fee of 250 escudos (a figure given me by a tailor), exempt from contract labour.

Many European residents seem to think that the only European products natives desire are cloths, clothing, and wine. This is not so; villagers wanted me to sell them kerosene for lamps, D.D.T. powder for their hair, and soap. It is interesting that the occasions on which an Otjimbundu would accumulate large (for him) sums all fall outside the maize-for-cloth pattern of trading. These occasions are bridewealth payment (and counting all expenses this may well come to 800 escudos—£10 or more), which is a traditional due, the purchase of bicycles (according to place of purchase from 1,200 escudos [£15] to 1,500 escudos [£18. 15. 0]) which are prestige-giving objects, and the trading journeys to buy cattle. Kambungo had

[5] The trader whose opinions I have previously quoted (Senhor Alberto Oliveira Mendes of Chicunda), remarked, 'It is the women who save us. The men make a shirt last for three or four years but the women get something new every year.'

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The rules about avoidance at night are still kept. The prohibitions on a man borrowing his father's clothes and sleeping in the same room as his father seem to survive. The prohibition on a child speaking the name of his father or mother reported by Childs is not, and was not formerly, found in this area. It is, however, wrong for a child to address his parents by name.

Children begin to work in the fields when they are about six. Occasionally boys of 10 to 11 go to the coffee fields for two months work, but usually boys do not go out to work until they are about 14 or 15.

A boy going out to work should ask his father's permission to go though this is not always done. Returning from work whether contract labour or voluntary work a boy should bring presents to his relatives. He would be expected to give something, say, a jacket, to his father, and a cloth to his mother, on returning from voluntary work and a shirt to his father on coming back from contract labour. These gifts should be made in kind. Money lent from son to father should be repaid, though it is wrong for a son to enforce payment by appealing to the post for policemen. A father may give money to his son for bride-wealth, and may suggest a choice of bride. He cannot constrain, nor could he in the past, his son and daughter to a marriage they do not wish.

A man cannot be said to have real authority over his grown sons. The stated norm is that a man's sons stay in the same village till he dies. He has no power to make them do so, and they are not condemned by public opinion if they live elsewhere. A man's attitude to classificatory 'fathers' is determined by the age, status, and personalities of those involved, rather than by jural rights and obligations. I have found men unable to tell me what had become of their own brothers' children.

Formerly when the father of an adolescent boy died he would join the household of a father's brother. Nowadays this would be much less likely, as it is common for such a boy to settle with other categories of kin, notably siblings and maternal kinsfolk. A man is free to stay with his brothers if he wishes, or to leave them.

While the tie between full brothers is held to be the strongest, as regards classificatory brothers there seems to be a slight

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582 Another explanation, which I have quoted earlier, is that if one marries a kinswoman, one's children, when they grow up, will not leave, since they see 'a cross-cousin here, a cross-cousin there':

All these reasons are no doubt to some extent valid. There are no fixed limits for bridewealth and no doubt some bride-[583] wealths paid in a cross-cousin marriage are higher than some paid in marriages between non-kin; however, it is generally held that a kinsman is less demanding over the question of bridewealth than a non-kinsman. There is some evidence that cross-cousin marriages are more stable than those with non-kinsfolk. The high proportion of cross-cousin marriages naturally leads to an individual tending, when considering the possibility of marriage, to think of his female kin, even though there is no individual girl whom he is expected to marry.

768 The custom of fining a man whose wife had died was noted among the Ovimbundu a hundred years ago by Ladislau Magyar; in recent times it seems to have disappeared from most of Umbundu country. Its survival in Gumba up to the last few years may be related to the links existing between Gumba and the northern non-Umbundu peoples, who apparently practise it to this day.

582 The last of the explanations given may be translated thus, 'Cross-cousin marriage means that the children will have the same individuals as both patrikin and matrikin. They will remain in their father's village, where he is living with his kin and will not be inclined to return to their matrikin.' This line of argument comes close to the 'observer' explanation previously offered that preferential marriage greatly increases the number of social relations within a neighbourhood. The Ovimbundu do not see this aspect of cross-cousin marriage, and this fits their [829] lack of any 'model' of their own society as a whole, which is in turn a consequence of the rapid social change they have experienced. However, they do see cross-cousin marriage as increasing the number of ties which exist for an individual in his village and neighbourhood.

602 The diagrams and information contained in Chapter IV have already indicated how individuals are linked by marriage ties, and in Chapter VII the way in which brothers-in-law may

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582 husband. Another explanation is that this is a northern practice which has spread into Gumba.[9]

584 A young man who wishes to marry approaches the girl of his choice and asks her to marry him. He then asks her parents for their permission. The consent of both partners and of their parents is required now as in the past, though parental consent may often be evaded by running off to the towns and getting married there. After that negotiations are conducted with a senior kinsman as intermediary. Before the marriage can take
583 place, bridewealth must be paid over. It is this that gives the right to claim damages for adultery. When asked why bridewealth is paid, informants are likely to say that it compensates the father for the expense of the bringing up of his daughter.

[178] The amount of bridewealth paid has been rising. Two informants said that four yards (metres) of cloth and a bottle of rum formed the bridewealth in the time of the rubber trade. Others suggested as the bridewealth of that period a hoe and a few sleeping-mats. Alternatively seashells or even Portuguese coins, which were not then used in transactions among the Ovimbundu, were employed. These bridewealth objects were obtained from outside Umbundu country and had a certain rarity value, unlike the other objects which were very common. In the early thirties Hastings also mentioned the bridewealth as consisting of four yards of cloth, a bottle of rum, plus a kerchief given to her father's sister.[10] Money seems to have come in as a regular part of bridewealth about 1940.

When Cypriano married in 1949 Rosa, a sister's daughter, he paid 200 escudos (about £2. 10s.), a black cloth to her mother, and a small pig to her father. When Pedro Epalanga Chimbalanya married, near the Bimbe mission, in 1955 he paid 400 escudos, one cloth of six metres, a head cloth, a woman's blouse, and a bottle of rum. When in 1956 Daniel married Feliciana, a sister's daughter of Ndjoleya and his cross-cousin, he paid 400 escudos, whereas when Jose the son of Paulo married in the same year he paid 300 escudos also for a cross-cousin.

The bridewealth should be paid to the father. If however, a

[9] Explanation given by Padre Feltin.
[10] Hastings, p. 95.

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man has four daughters he will receive the bridewealth only for the two oldest. The mother's brother will receive the bridewealth for the third sister and a brother for the fourth. If the father is dead, the payment is made to a mother's brother or a brother real or classificatory. To some extent the size of the bridewealth is a reflection of the status of the girl—thus on the railway line 1,000 escudos (£12. 10s.) might be paid for a girl who could read and write. In my own area a Gumba man might pay more for a girl from Ndjandju than for a Cela girl because Ndjandju is regarded, owing to its proximity to the mission, as being more civilized. There exist also counter-gifts. Ndjoleya, who as mother's brother received the bridewealth for Feliciana, gave a pig to Daniel, and it is customary for a pig to be given to the husband by his wife's father on the birth of their first child.[11]

The Umbundu word for marriage *oku kwela* is applied both to customary marriage and to Christian marriage. To distinguish between the two, Portuguese words are taken over, *amigar* (originally, to live in concubinage) being used for the customary marriage, and *casar* (to marry) being used for marriage in church. The use of *amigar* of a particular marriage implies that the people making it are pagans, or Christians who have omitted the church ceremony for one reason or another. In Gumba the church marriage, while it gives status among Christians is not an important occasion in the local milieu, and people who have been through the church marriage but who have not made the *wala*, the traditional wedding feast, are not permitted by their senior kin to cohabit. Around the mission the church ceremony is regarded as the important thing, and the *wala* seems to be thought of simply as a party. Traditionally and usually at the present day the *wala* is held in the dry season.

In the wedding feast there are a number of variations between one occasion and another, but a general outline can

[11] Hastings, p. 110, states that a year or two after the birth of the first child another pig is given which is called the pig of cutting off. The giving and the accepting of this severes all responsibilities between the families. The women can no more be returned to her father's people for misdemeanour—only in the case of the death of her husband will she be taken back.

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Epalanga. Told what had happened, he said that he would keep out of it, and that he had advised Guilherme to live elsewhere. In the afternoon of the same day, as heavy rain was falling, a number of people ran up and bounded on to my veranda. These included Anna, another girl (I think a sister of hers) both rather frightened, Simbwyikoka, Luciano, Paulo and some others. Anna said that Simbwyikoka was a sorcerer[3] and would kill her, and sooner than be killed by sorcery she would jump in the river. Simbwyikoka and Luciano had come to Epalanga to try and recover the 250 escudos which had been paid over in bridewealth. The catechist tried to intervene saying 'The catechist is the chief[4] of everybody in the village', but nobody paid any attention to him. Eventually, as the girl continued to threaten to jump in the river, I contributed 200 escudos, and so those involved left satisfied.

Early the following day I heard that Guilherme had returned from the post with two policemen to arrest various people. Those arrested were Sapapula, his cross-cousins Epalata (5), and Wasuka, and the latter's son Kuseka, Kasosi, Paulo, Pedro the catechist, Bartolomeu (32), Paulo's assistant in school matters, and his son Eugenio. Eugenio and Kuseka were arrested for not paying taxes and their fathers were arrested presumably for their supposed responsibility. Epalata was arrested for a similar alleged offence on the part of one of his sons, who was away as a labourer.

When I came to Guilherme's house a lengthy wrangle was going on from which I select some themes. Guilherme denied that he had planned to burn the catechetical school, the anthropologist's house, and his own house. (These charges were almost certainly invented.)

Paulo said that he had baptized a dying son of Guilherme, who, despite this, had not shown him any respect. He also denied that he had committed adultery with Guilherme's wife. (This would in any case be most unlikely owing to Paulo's blindness, resulting from an eye disease.)

Sapapula declared angrily: 'I gave Guilherme land here but

[3] This accusation was regarded simply as the product of fear and nothing more was heard of it.

[4] He used the word applied to chiefs of Gumba and other sub-chiefdom.